

15th Anniversary Celebration

COMMUNITY AWARENESS SERIES
of the Jersey City Public Library



Saturday, October 24, 1992
Miller Branch Library Auditorium

Rod Rodgers Dance Company

ABOUT THE COMPANY

The internationally acclaimed ROD RODGERS DANCE COMPANY enters its third decade with continuing dedication to the creation and presentation of concert dance theatre, training in performing arts techniques and arts programming as an educational vehicle. For 22 years this versatile ensemble has demonstrated the ability to "reach" both sophisticated and grass roots audiences with uplifting dramatizations which entertain, challenge stereotypes and question man's inhumanity to man. Through many of the company's best known works that explore and celebrate the Black experience, the Rodgers Company continues to have special appeal to minority and multi-ethnic audiences.



Rod Rodgers

ABOUT THE CHOREOGRAPHER

Rod Rodgers is an internationally reknown master teacher, art consultant and choreographer, best known for the development of a permanent repertoire of concert pieces for his New York based dance /theatre company, which was started in 1967. He is currently making plans for the company's 25th Anniversary which will be celebrated in 1993.

In recent years the company has of of featured POETS & PEACEMAKERS, a series of thematic multi-arts productions dramatizing the creative struggles and celebrating landmark achievements of Black Heroes. Completed tributes have been inspired by Langston Hughes , Martin Luther King, Jr., Dr. George Washington Carver, Duke Ellington and Harriet Tubman.

Rodgers has received fellowships and choreographic commissions from the News York State Council on the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Rockefeller Foundation, Creative Artists in Public Service, the Beard Fund, the John Hay Whitney Foundation, the New York Bicenten-

nial Committee of the U.S. Constitution.

Rodgers' choreography has been performed by a number of dance companies (in addition to the Rodgers Dance Company). They have included the Cleo Parker Robinson Dance Theatre, in Denver, Colorado; Baltimore Dance Theatre, Baltimore, Maryland; Dance Ensemble of Portland, Oregon; Gateway Dance Theatre, Des Moines, Iowa; Danny Sloan Dance Theatre, Boston, Massachussetts; Lula Washington Dance Theatre, Los Angeles, and others.

The Rod Rodgers Dance Company has had extensive national tours and international activities in Italy and Mexico. The company also served as cultural emissaries for the U.S., touring 5 African countries (Senegal, Zaire, Zambia, Nigeria and Kenya), Portugal and Syria for the U.S. International Communications Agency.

Contact:

**ROD
RODGERS
DANCE
COMPANY**

**62 East 4th Street
New York, NY 10003**

212/674-9066



PHILLIP THOMAS

Phillip Thomas is a Member of the Board of Directors of the Carter G. Woodson Foundation and has extensive experience as a producer, and administrator of performing arts programs and a wealth of background in marketing, management and fundraising.

He is responsible for administering a multi-disciplinary arts organization that operates a national touring program, presents an annual statewide performing arts series, and coordinates arts education programs in local New Jersey school districts.

Phillip is primarily concerned with increasing performances, audiences and earned income opportunities for artists, while providing audiences with greater access to the rich and varied expressions in African American theater,

dance, music and literature.

Phillip is a theater graduate of Montclair State College, and served as a fellow in the Expansion Arts Program of the National Endowment for the Arts, in 1976. He has worked with the Negro Ensemble Company, Paterson Arts Council, New Jersey State Council on the Arts, Newark Board of Education and Newark Symphony Hall.

Currently Phillip is a council member of the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, and a board member of the Newark Arts Council and the Association of Performing Arts Presenters and director of Arts Education for the New Jersey Performing Arts Center.

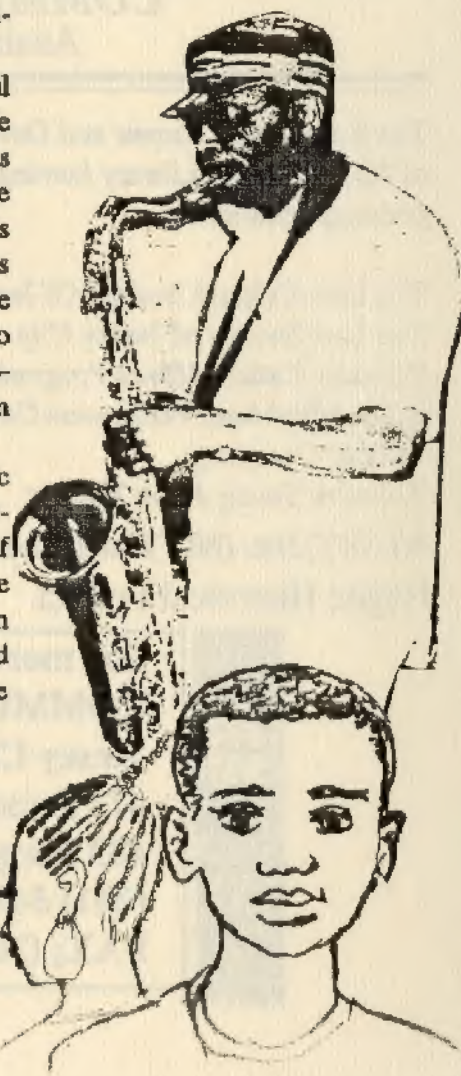
COMMUNITY AWARENESS SERIES 15th Anniversary

OVERVIEW

The Community Awareness Series (CAS) is an innovative, multi-cultural, educational and public information project located in Jersey City.

CAS, a department of the Jersey City Public Library, was born out of a successful experiment between Miller Branch Library, its community and the Spirit of Life Cultural Arts, Inc. (originators and co-developers of CAS circa, 1977). The series grew first from a program which stirred tremendous interest; the Spirit of Life Cultural Arts, Inc. This group of local artists and musicians who ran children's workshops and performed regularly throughout the city, were the community's ambassadors. In 1977 the Miller Branch was slated for demolition. Due to the efforts of CAS and the community, the Miller Branch was saved. People united to develop a natural evolutionary consciousness, thus tangibly resulting in the establishment of the only cultural arts center located in the heart of Jersey City's African American community.

The primary objective of the CAS is to offer consciousness, hope and artistic inspiration to the urban disadvantaged, our youth and residents of the community-at-large via free cultural programs and multi-faceted presentations from people of all walks of life. In its 14 year history of service, CAS boasts a broad perspective in range of presentations afforded the citizens of Jersey City. Through it, more than 800 separate political, educational and cultural events, many featuring famed performers and speakers, have been produced. A photographic retrospective circling the auditorium highlights and documents many of these events.



V. Holley

OVERVIEW con'td.

The Community Awareness Series of the Jersey City Public Library, is a multi-disciplinary arts organization, which in conjunction with the Department of Human Resources; Community Development Block Grant Program, administers an onstage Outreach Exposure Project performance series. The program features cultural performances by The Spirit of Life Ensemble. The quality schoolday musical assembly in support of Drug Prevention, Aids Education and Academic Achievement.

HIGHLIGHTS

Tribute to Rev. Martin L. King, Jr.
International Women Month
Pureto Rico Discovery
Native American History and Culture
Family Health Issue & Drug Prevention
Art & Photography Exhibitions
Major Music Concerts
Newsletters & Periodicals

Kwanzaa Festival
Film Forums/Meet the Film Maker
Meet the Author
Library Bibliography
Community & School Outreach
Theater Productions
Artist In Residence Program
"Urban Forum" - Cable TV Ch. 51
"Cultural Odyssey" - Cable TV Ch. 51

COMMUNITY AWARENESS SERIES Assisted InThe Development Of

The Restoration, Repair and Development
of Miller Branch Library (saving it from
pending demolition).

The Irish Cultural Society Of Jersey City
The Jazz Society of Jersey City
Hispanic/Latino Affairs Program JCPL
Body, Mind Soul Performers Collective
Theater Company
Kumba Young Adult Theater
NU XT, Inc. (NU Times Theater Co.)
Hague Historical Project

Cultural Enrichment Series Inagural Program
of The Hudson Repertory Dance Theate
The Women of Sustenance Organization

Book on the Community Awareness Series
Video Documentary on CAS History
Cultural Outreach Theme Project

P.R.E.P. Literacy Program
Hudson County College Consortium,
Literacy Program
Friends of MBL/CAS



For more information contact:
COMMUNITY AWARENESS SERIES
Jersey City Public Library
472 Jersey Avenue, Jersey City, NJ 07302
489 Bergen Avenue, Jersey City, NJ 07304
(201) 547-4505 /6907/4611
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Saturday, October 24th, 1992

Celebrating it's 15th Anniversary
COMMUNITY AWARENESS SERIES
of the Jersey City Public Library

Presents the ROD RODGERS DANCE COMPANY

with: Gacirah Diagne Karla McFarlane
Kim Grier Andres Santiago
Lawrence Joseph Tammy Thomas
Lisa Viola

MELODY BEAL
Lighting Designer

KALAN RODGERS
Stage Manager

* * * * * **PROGRAM**

BOX '71

Created in memory of George Jackson and the Men of Attica. The performance of this work is dedicated to the continuing struggle of the People of South Africa... May their sacrifices win for them the right of self-determination.

Original Score
The Man Outside
The Man Inside

Sidney Smart
Rod Rodgers
Andres Santiago

LANGSTON LIVES!* *celebrating poetry of Langston Hughes (Excerpts)*

1. Blues Images

Soloist
Poems

Kim Grier
"Troubled Women"
"Song for Billy Holiday"
"Still Here"

2. African Memories

Performed by
Poems

The Company
"Afro-American Fragments"
"Mother to Son"
"I've Known Rivers"

Music composed by

Arranged & Performed by

Quincy Jones
Noel Pointer

* * * **INTERMISSION** * * *

ROD RODGERS DANCE COMPANY

WIDELY ACCLAIMED FOR ITS PROVOCATIVE SOCIAL COMMENTARY
NOW OFFERS A UNIQUE MULTI-ARTS SERIES

POETS & PEACEMAKERS

A tribute to Harriet Tubman is among the final segments of POETS & PEACEMAKERS, a series of multi-arts tribute dramatizing the struggles and celebrating creative accomplishment of landmark figures in Black culture.

This thematic series encourages a broader understanding and appreciation of a rich legacy bequeathed to contemporary society by these historic figures. Each piece is the result of extensive research and in-depth collaborations between scholars and artists from several disciplines. Each is designed as a vehicle to encourage greater awareness and understanding of the vision, sacrifice and aspirations of these heroic, creative champions of peace.

The first completed segment of this ambitious project, **LANGSTON LIVES!**, inspired by and featuring the poetry of Langston Hughes, has been acclaimed by critics and won ovations in gala festivals and concert presentations across the U.S. Full productions of **LANGSTON LIVES!** have been presented at the L.A. International Olympics Cultural Festival, at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., and in two major festivals at Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts. The work was also offered as the centerpiece of a fundraising event for the benefit of UNICEF African Drought Relief Fund and in educational programs across the country.

AGAINST GREAT ODDS, one of the most spectacular productions in the POETS & PEACEMAKERS series, is the product of Rodgers' extended collaboration with jazz composer/musician Jimmy Owens and visual artist Eve Sandler. Inspired by the wide ranging achievements of Black scientists and inventors and dedicated to George Washington Carver, this work was premiered at the Syracuse Civic Center with a live performance of Owens' music to enthusiastic reviews. This impressionistic dance/theatre piece was also featured in New York City at the La Mama International Theatre Center.

A tribute to Martin Luther King, Jr., **THE LEGACY** (title and original music by Coleridge Taylor Perkinson) was created for the first year's celebration of the national holiday in honor of this advocate of peaceful change. **THE LEGACY** contains compelling dance images reflecting the courage and dedication of King who, inspired by the non-violent philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi, was one of the key leaders of the struggle on the 1960s to end legal discrimination in the U.S. and helped revitalize the search for freedom and individual rights.

ECHOES OF ELLINGTON, the product of an extended collaboration with the great Billy Taylor, has been praised by reviewers for its combination of dramatic and humorous sketches. Its original compositions and sparkling interpretations of classic Ellington tunes by the Billy Taylor Trio provide a basis for one of the most purely entertaining tributes from POETS & PEACEMAKERS.

Collaborations are now in progress with noted jazz composer/musicians for additional productions in this exciting series. Most of the material can be effectively presented to recordings of the music when required by financial constraints. But for producers who want the full impact of "live ingredients," Billy Taylor, Jimmy Owens, Oliver Lake, Bob Thompson and Vishnu Woods are some of the dynamic artists who will be working with the company offering exciting double headers of music and dance. Where desirable, the poetic narratives accompanying these tributes can be performed in different languages.

FOR INFORMATION RE: Availability of the Rod Rodgers Dance Company for touring in the U.S. and abroad, CONTACT:

ROD RODGERS DANCE COMPANY
62 East 4th Street New York, NY 10003
(212) 674-9066



THE LEGACY* (excerpts)... dedicated to Martin Luther King, Jr.
Music (except where otherwise noted*) Coleridge Taylor Perkinson

1. Spirit of Rosa
Soloist Kim Grier
2. March/Breakthrough The Company
3. Letters From Jail
*Music Bernice Reagan
Soloist Lawrence Joseph
4. Freedom Road The Company

- P A U S E -

ICTUS (Stroke or Beat)

...from the Company's signature series of contemporary RHYTHMDANCES

Integral Score by Rod Rodgers
Performed by The Company
Soloist Andres Santiago

ALL CHOREOGRAPHY ON PROGRAM BY ROD RODGERS NO UNAUTHORIZED PHOTOS OR RECORDING OF ANY KIND

-Program subject to change-

ROD RODGERS DANCE COMPANY, founded 23 years ago, is preparing for it's 25th Anniversary Season (1993-94). The company tours extensively throughout the country and abroad, also maintains a commitment to bringing programs to communities that normally have only limited opportunities to see professional dance concerts. The company was sponsored by the United States International Communications Agency for a six week tour to Senegal, Nigeria, Zaire, Kenya, Zambia, Syria and Portugal; and more recently was featured in an International Festival of Contemporary Dance in Mexico City. Besides cameo/concerts like this one, the Rodgers' company also offers larger (full company) concerts, and exciting lectures and workshops, and maintains an ongoing training program with classes in Jazz, Afro-Haitian, Afro-Caribbean and several modern styles.

*... from POETS & PEACEMAKERS a series of multi-arts productions celebrating the creative struggles and landmark contributions of Black Heroes. Following the original tributes (to Langston Hughes and Martin Luther King, Jr.) additional productions have been developed which were inspired by George Washington Carver, Duke Ellington and Harriet Tubman.

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., was both a man and a symbol. His story is both an individual and a collective one. King has been, at last, officially recognized as a member of the American Pantheon: an extraordinary man of an extraordinary era whose work and dedication to the Civil Rights Movement inspired a generation and will continue to inspire generations to come. Martin Luther King, Jr. lived his life in struggle and died so that millions after him could live with pride. He inspired others to seek equality through non-violent civil action and was recognized with the Nobel Peace Prize. The Civil Rights Movement, under his leadership, desegregated public facilities and schools, and began to eradicate institutionalized racism in the social, political and economic life in the U.S. THE LEGACY was created to celebrate the official designation of King's Birthday as a national holiday for all Americans.

LANGSTON HUGHES was a leading literary spokesman, portraying the Black Man's experience and speaking out about the problems of the poor and about Race relations, from the Harlem Renaissance in the 20's to the Civil Rights thrust of the Black life in America, especially the Urban North, specifically the sights and sounds and rhythms of Harlem. He is known as "the Poet Laureate of the Man in the Ghetto Streets". The universality of Langston Hughes was attested to by the range of numerous honors received from the NAACP Spingarn Medal for Excellence to his election to the National Institute of Arts and Letters.

ABOUT THE CHOREOGRAPHER Rod Rodgers is a second generation choreographer who has worked extensively in musical theatre, best known for development of a concert repertoire via the New York based international touring company that bears his name. His credits include the staging and direction of the BLACK COWBOYS, presented at the City Center of Music and Drama before touring nationally and internationally. He choreographed THE PRODIGAL SISTER, with score by Mikki Grant, produced by Woody King, Jr., created choreography and did the lead role in a television special for LIKE IT IS; and choreographed Ntozake Shange's SASSAFRAS, CYPRESS and INDIGO, produced by Joseph Papp at the NY Shakespeare Festival/Public Theatre. Mr. Rodgers' directed and choreographed several productions for Voices, Inc. including a CBS television special, JOURNEY INTO BLACKNESS, and MARTIN LUTHER KING. His work was featured in Brooklyn Academy of Music's retrospective of Black Dance, the "Dance Black America Festival". He has received fellowships and commissions from the NY State Council on the Arts, the Rockefeller Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, Creative Artists in Public Service, the Beard Fund, the John Hay Whitney Foundation and other sources. He was the recipient of the Spirit of Detroit Creative Award and an AUDELCO for innovative audience development. He has published numerous articles on Dance and is a noted lecturer, master teacher and Arts Consultant. His choreography is included in repertoires of a number of companies.

Activities of the Rodgers Dance Co. are made possible in part through assistance from the National Endowment for the Arts, the New York State Council on the Arts, the NYC Department of Cultural Affairs, NY Foundation for the Arts, the office of the Borough President of Manhattan, the Brooklyn Association of the Arts & Culture, the Cooper Square Development Committee, the Gramercy Park Foundation and numerous friends.

ABOUT THE DANCERS

KIM GRIER is a native New Yorker who received her B.F.A. in Dance from the Philadelphia College of Performing Arts. She has worked with the Consort Dance Company, Inner Pulsations Dance Theatre, Danny Sloan Dance Company, Wyllanese Productions, David Rousseve and Dancers and Forces of Nature. Her television credits include "City Lights", "Visions", and "Evening Magazine". Besides her featured solo work with RRDC and her role as director in the Performing Workshop, Ms. Grier is on staff at the Harlem School of the Arts. Ms. Grier also choreographed an Off-Broadway production "The Dark Star from Harlem", and made her debut at The Metropolitan Opera House as a principal dancer in George Gershwin's "Porgy and Bess". Kim is currently studying with Milton Meyers.

KARLA McFARLANE received her B.F.A. in dance from City College. She is also a graduate from the High School of Performing Arts where she majored in modern dance. Ms. McFarlane has held scholarships at the Clark Center for the Performing Arts and Diane McIntyre's Sounds in Motion. She has performed with The Charles Moore Dance Theatre, Urban Bush Women, The All Nations Dance Company and is making her debut this season with the RRDC.

ANDRES SANTIAGO has trained in the Limon and Graham techniques as well as Afro-Caribbean rhythms both in the U.S. and abroad. He has performed with Manuel Alum, Dance Compas, Barrunto Dancers, Kaleidoscope Dancers and has choreographed and performed in the New York Renaissance Festival as well as Latin Ballroom Dances. Mr. Santiago is currently a member of the All Nations Dance Company, The Nai Niche Dance Company and RRDC, while enrolled in the Jennifer Muller scholarship program "The Works".

TAMMY THOMAS received her B.F.A. in Dance from the University of Michigan with a degree in Education and Psychology. Ms. Thomas is also co-director of the East/West Repertory Ensemble and has performed with Soundance, Lonnie Moreton, Janet Panetta, Joy Kellman and Dance Theatre of Long Island, among others. She is currently studying with Milton Meyers and teaches children the art of dance in the U.S. and abroad.

LISA VIOLA is from San Francisco and was raised in Hawaii where she received her early dance training with Barbara Thussen, Neil Fuson and Nolan Dingman. She has performed locally with the Honolulu City Ballet and various companies. In New York, she attended The School Of American Ballet as well as the Joffrey school. Ms. Viola has studied with David Howard and Diana Cartier, and has performed with Dance Express, Hudson Repertory Dance Theatre and the RRDC since 1987. She is currently an understudy with the Paul Taylor Company.

For Information re: the Training Program or Availability of RRDC Contact:

Rod Rodgers Dance Company

62 East 4th Street, NYC, NY 10003 (212) 674-9066